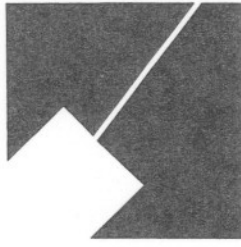


M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

MCPB
ITEM NO. ___
9-14-06

August 31, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Gwen Wright, Acting Chief *GW*
Countywide Planning Division

Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief *RGH*
Transportation Planning

Glenn Kreger, Silver Spring-Takoma Park Team Leader *GK*
Community-Based Planning

FROM: Larry Cole: 301-495-4528, for the Park and Planning Department *LC*

PROJECT: Alteration of Garage 55 for Dixon Avenue Extended

AGENCY: Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral No. 06810-DPW&T-1

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING TEAM AREA: Silver Spring-Takoma Park

RECOMMENDATIONS: Approval with comments to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT).

Staff recommends that the Board approve the Mandatory Referral of the proposed project (see Attachment 1: Location Map, which shows the relationship between the project site and the Silver Spring Transit Center) with the following comments to DPWT:

1. A fifty-foot-wide roadway width for Dixon Avenue Extended will be made a condition of any Preliminary Plan or Site Plan approval for the Mid-Town Silver Spring Development.
2. Consider using the lower levels of the garage east of the proposed Dixon Avenue Extended as the Silver Spring bike station.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTIONS:

The Planning Board reviewed the Project Prospectus for the Ripley District Facility Planning study on June 23, 2005. As part of the proposed network of roadways in the Ripley District, Dixon Avenue was approved as a fifty-foot-wide, four-lane roadway in an eighty-foot-wide right-of-way, as recommended in the Silver Spring Central Business District (CBD) Sector Plan (see Attachment 2).

The project plan for the Mid-Town Silver Spring Development, a high-rise residential project with 328 dwelling units, was originally approved by the Planning Board on July 29, 2004, and an amendment was approved on March 30, 2006 as Project Plan #9-04006A. The opinion for the latter decision has not yet been published, but the Board endorsed the following staff comments:

- Construct Dixon Avenue (as) a forty-foot-wide roadway with a sidewalk on the east side and a shared-use path on the west side, including the section beneath the existing parking garage. Final design, the construction schedule and necessary agreements to be confirmed at preliminary plan. Implementation of this condition will be finalized before any occupancy permit.
- Construct the retrofit of the DPWT parking garage as envisioned in the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan to allow for continued use of the structure, while Dixon Avenue is extended through to Ripley Street. Details and agreements of this retrofit to be addressed through the Mandatory Referral process. Implementation of this condition will be finalized before issuance of any occupancy permit.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project would modify the existing Montgomery County Parking Garage 55 to permit a 150-foot-long extension of Dixon Avenue to the south from its current terminus at Bonifant Street. Such an extension is recommended in the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan and was anticipated in the original design of the garage.

The plan shows Dixon Avenue extended through the ground level of the garage as a fifty-foot-wide roadway, striped as two fifteen-foot-wide travel lanes and two ten-foot-wide parking lanes (see Attachments 3 and 4). A ten-foot-wide brick sidewalk would be constructed on the east side of the road. A twelve-foot-wide scored concrete shared-use path would be constructed on the west side, offset from the garage by a two-foot-wide brick panel and offset from the curb by a six-foot-wide brick panel.

At the ground level, the small remaining portion of the garage east of the Proposed Dixon Avenue extension would be striped for parking. Portions of the second and third levels of the garage would be removed to provide the headroom needed for a public roadway. The upper levels of the garage would remain unchanged.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Roadway

The right-of-way for the proposed Dixon Avenue extension is consistent with the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan, which calls for Dixon Avenue to be a Business District Street in an eighty-foot-wide right-of-way.

The approved Project Plan 9-04006A calls for a forty-foot-wide roadway, but a fifty-foot-wide roadway is proposed to be consistent with the typical section approved by the Planning Board on June 23, 2005, as part of the review of the Project Prospectus for the Ripley District Facility Planning study. The fifty-foot-wide roadway also matches County Standard No. MC-214.01 for a Commercial-Business District Road and approximately matches the existing forty-eight-foot-wide roadway section of Dixon Avenue across Bonifant Street.

Staff believes that a forty-foot-wide roadway (as shown in the Project Plan) would be sufficient to accommodate two travel lanes and two parking lanes, which is the intended immediate use but could not easily accommodate the four-lane roadway recommended in the Sector Plan.

This project is being undertaken in connection with the adjacent Midtown Silver Spring Development, for which Project Plan 9-04006A was approved earlier this year, and the construction of this project would be done by KSI under permit from Montgomery County. (See Background below for further discussion on this topic.)

Staff concurs with the proposed fifty-foot roadway width and recommends that the Planning Board also give its concurrence at this time to ensure that the further extension of Dixon Avenue as part of any development approval will match this roadway section.

Bicyclist Accommodation

Off-Road Bike Accommodation

Off-road bike accommodation would be provided via the twelve-foot-wide scored concrete shared-use path along the west side of Dixon Avenue.

On-Road Bike Accommodation

On-road bike accommodation is not called for in either the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan or the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan. On-road bicyclists would be accommodated however, via the proposed fifteen-foot wide travel lanes.

Pedestrian Accommodation

Pedestrians would be accommodated along the proposed sidewalk on the east side of Dixon Avenue and the proposed shared-use path along the west side of Dixon Avenue.

Landscaping/Streetscaping

The proposed segment of Dixon Avenue being considered would be located under Garage 55. While artificial lighting would be provided for public safety, it would be insufficient to sustain vegetation. Therefore, no street trees or other plant materials would be installed.

The ten-foot-wide sidewalk on the east side of Dixon Avenue under the garage would be constructed with brick pavers per the Silver Spring streetscape standards.

The twenty-foot-wide area on the west side of Dixon Avenue under the garage would be constructed with a two-foot-wide brick paver strip along the garage wall, a twelve-foot-wide scored concrete strip that would be suitable for bicycle use, and a six-foot-wide brick paver strip along the curb.

Lighting

Washington Globe ground-mounted luminaires would be installed per the Silver Spring streetscape standards. Light fixtures would also be mounted to the garage ceiling. The lighting levels achieved would meet the recommendations of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.

Garage Modifications and Possible Bike Station

As noted above, the current plan for the small portion of the ground level of the garage east of the Proposed Dixon Avenue extension (about 130 feet long and 44 feet wide) is to stripe it for parking. The fourth level of the garage and above would remain unchanged.

There would be "remainder" portions of the second and third levels of the garage east of Dixon Avenue Extended since portions of these levels would be removed to provide the headroom needed for a public roadway. Unlike the ground level however, no vehicular access would be possible although they would be accessible via the existing stair tower and elevator at the northeast corner of the garage. No use for these levels has been determined, although DPWT is considering using them for storage.

Staff recommends that DPWT consider using the remainder portions of the garage as a bike station for the Silver Spring Transit Center and downtown Silver Spring. A bike station would include bike parking and repairs, and perhaps shower facilities for commuter bicyclists.

Staff has previously recommended that a bike station be included within the transit center itself, but DPWT determined that there was insufficient room to accommodate it in the public sector portion of the transit center. Staff is concerned that if the bike station is made part of the private sector portion of the transit center, it would always need to either make a profit or would require a subsidy that could be eliminated or reduced in the future. A bike station on private property would always be at a greater risk of being discontinued. Therefore, while a bike station would preferably be located within the transit center, staff believes that since this nearby space is available, the feasibility of creating a bike station in the garage should be considered.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

No public outreach has been done by DPWT. A notice of the Board's review of the Mandatory Referral was sent to citizens associations and other groups.

BACKGROUND

The Mid-Town Silver Spring Development has an approved Project Plan, but does not yet have Preliminary Plan or Site Plan approval. The proposed road construction is being undertaken so as to avoid a possible conflict with the interim operation of the Silver Spring Transit Center. The construction of this project would be done by KSI under permit from Montgomery County.

The transit center is scheduled to be under construction from Summer 2007 to late Winter-early Spring 2009. Prior to that construction, the bus operations will be moved to Bonifant Street and the existing segment of Dixon Avenue between Bonifant Street and Wayne Avenue. The Kiss-and-Ride area will be moved into Garage 55 and would be accessed from the current garage entrance on Bonifant Street opposite Wayne Avenue. While these interim operations can be accommodated whether or not Dixon Avenue is extended through the garage, they cannot be accommodated while Dixon Avenue Extended and the Garage 55 modifications are under construction. Therefore, KSI needs to begin this work as soon as possible.

The interim bus and Kiss-and-Ride operations had not yet been determined when the Planning Board approved the Mandatory Referral of the Silver Spring Transit Center on March 10, 2005, but were discussed as part of WMATA's public hearing on the project, held on April 24, 2006.

LC:gw
Attachments

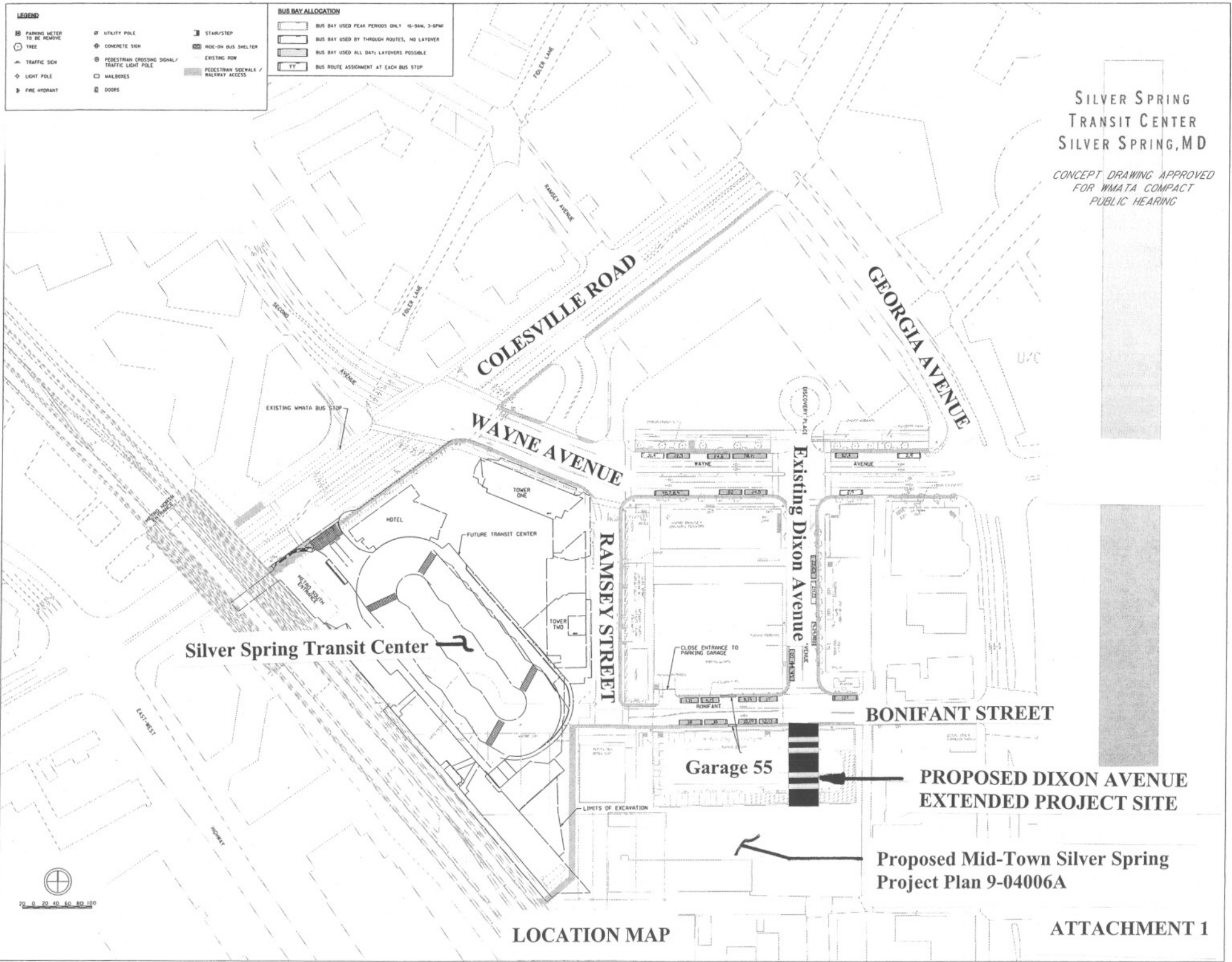
mno to MCPB re Dixon Ave Ext-Garage 55 06807-DPWT-1

- LEGEND**
- ☒ PARKING METER TO BE REMOVED
 - ⊕ UTILITY POLE
 - ☐ STAR/STEP
 - ⊙ TREE
 - ⊕ CONCRETE SIGN
 - ☐ SIDE-ON BUS SHELTER
 - ⊕ TRAFFIC SIGN
 - ⊕ PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNAL / TRAFFIC LIGHT POLE
 - ⊕ LIGHT POLE
 - ⊕ FIRE HYDRANT
 - ⊕ EXISTING ROW
 - ⊕ PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK / WALKWAY ACCESS
 - ⊕ DOORS

- BUS BAY ALLOCATION**
- ☐ BUS BAY USED PEAK PERIODS ONLY 15-30M, 3-6PM
 - ☐ BUS BAY USED BY THROUGH ROUTES, NO LAYOVER
 - ☐ BUS BAY USED ALL DAY; LAYOVERS POSSIBLE
 - ☐ YY BUS ROUTE ASSIGNMENT AT EACH BUS STOP

SILVER SPRING
TRANSIT CENTER
SILVER SPRING, MD

CONCEPT DRAWING APPROVED
FOR WMATA COMPACT
PUBLIC HEARING



LOCATION MAP

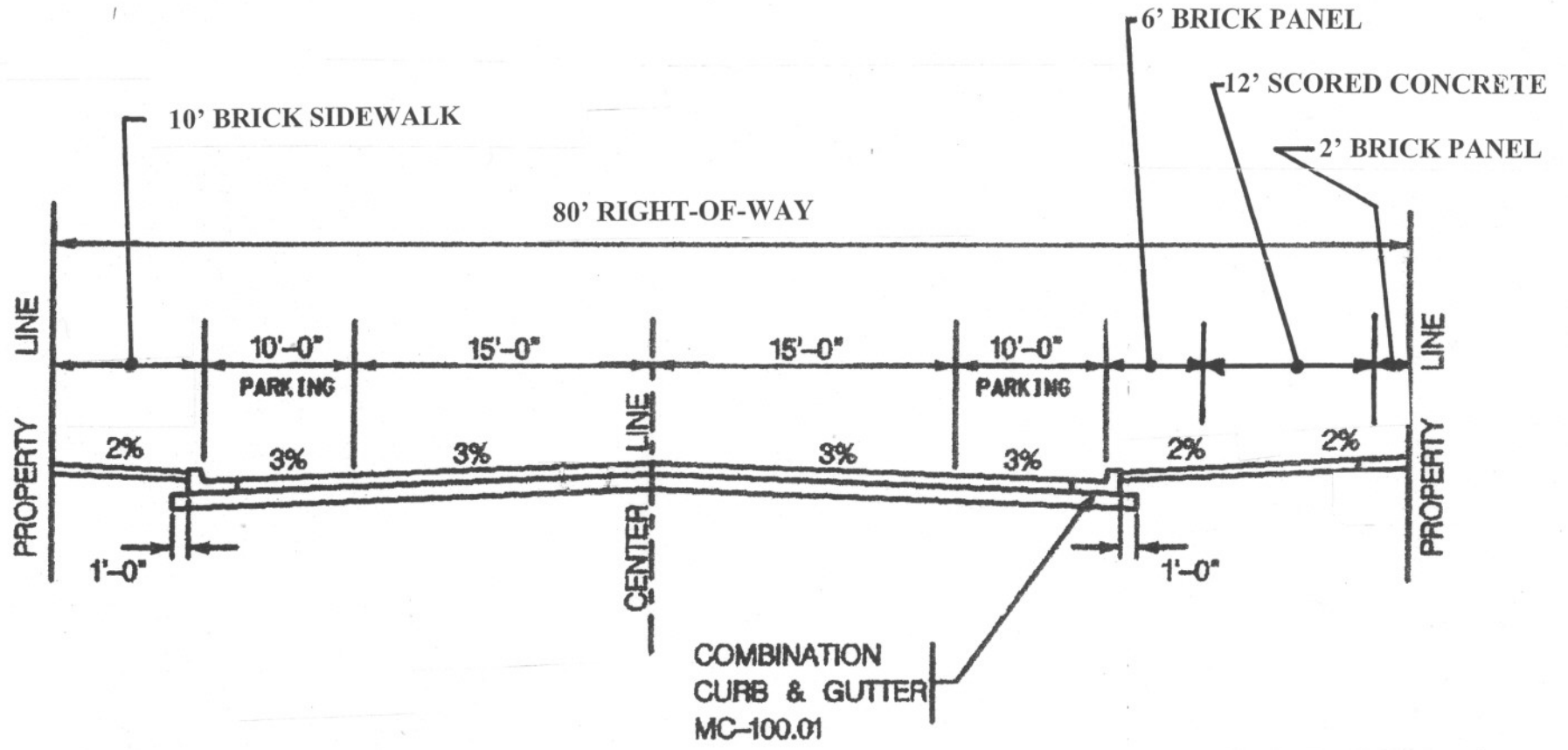
Portions of Second Avenue, Wayne Avenue, and East West Highway should be considered as promenades, focusing on pedestrian and bicycle movements to and from the Transit Center. Other CBD streets should be considered as green streets and mixed streets to emphasize pedestrian amenities where consistent with adjacent land uses.

- Provide streetscape, crosswalks, and other design features throughout the CBD that emphasize the pedestrian domain, while still moving auto traffic at a reasonable pace.
- Include pedestrian connections.
- Consider operational improvements at signalized intersections, such as right-turn-on-red prohibitions and exclusive pedestrian signal phasing to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Revise the Silver Spring Streetscaping Plan.

Roads

Make local road improvements to improve circulation in and around the CBD.

- Encourage through traffic to travel around the CBD via 16th Street, supporting the use of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road for CBD traffic.
- Examine the need for, and developing conceptual designs for intersection improvements at: Georgia and Wayne Avenues, Wayne Avenue and Cedar Street, Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street.
- Coordinate Fenton Street's realignment with improvements at Montgomery College.
- Coordinate possible improvements at Georgia and Burlington Avenues with improvements at Montgomery College.
- Construct a median for pedestrian refuge on East West Highway between Colesville Road and the entrance to the Blair Shopping Center.
- Construct Dixon Avenue to provide a continuous four-lane undivided roadway within an 80-foot right-of-way between Wayne Avenue and Silver Spring Avenue.
- Extend lane (between Colesville Road and Blair Mill Road) as a proposed new public street with a 60-foot right-of-way. Construction of this improvement as a private street may be considered during the plan approval process if the proposed design would provide greater public benefit.



DIXON AVENUE EXTENDED

TYPICAL SECTION
LOOKING SOUTH

Not to Scale